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LETTER DATED 21 NOVEMBER 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the interview given by Mr. Saddam Hussein, President of the Republic of Iraq, to the United States television network ABC on 15 November 1990.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. Abdul Amir A. AL-ANBARI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Mr. Saddam Hussein, President of the Republic of Iraq gave an interview to Mr. Peter Jennings, a correspondent of the United States television network ABC on 15 November 1990.

The interview dealt with the situation in the Arabian Gulf region, and the above-mentioned television network broadcast the interview during the evening of 15 November 1990. The following is the text of the interview.

ABC News: Mr. President, a few months ago you and the United States were friends. You were selling oil to it and it was assisting the development process in Iraq. You were not allies with the United States of America, you were friends. However, the United States and Iraqi armies are now confronting each other and may go to war. What do you think, Mr. President, about what has happened so far?

President: In reality, this question should be addressed to the United States Administration, because it was the United States Administration that came here with its army to threaten security in the region. Nevertheless, we say that we are still friends and regard the American people as our friends. We remain prepared, on bases of equality and justice, to establish a relationship with the United States, as we do with others. However, to say that the United States has participated in Iraq's development is inaccurate. Our purchases during the brief period following the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between us were generally confined to consumer goods, including cereals, but they were cut off from us by a decision of Congress in March 1990, i.e., five months before the events of 2 August.

ABC News: Mr. President, one of our friends in the region told us a day or so ago that one month ago he believed that the chances of war in the region were 75 per cent in favour of war and 25 per cent in favour of peace. He now believes that the chances of peace are 60 per cent and the chances of war 40 per cent. What do you believe, Mr. President?

President: We are not inside the mind of the United States Administration so as to be able to make estimates, because the decision for war is not our decision and can only come from the United States Administration and those pushing in that direction. We cannot now give definite odds for war or peace.

ABC News: Who is pushing the United States Administration?

President: As we conceive it, the United States Administration has made a misestimation and has rushed to take steps that have now become a great burden on it and on mankind as a whole. Those who push in that direction are Thatcher, Israel, Hosni Mubarak and the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States. This is our belief, but we can say that we speak clearly with regard to our position. We want peace. We want stability in the region, just as we want peace and stability throughout the world.

ABC News: May we then talk about peace, Mr. President, or about a peaceful solution to this crisis? Mr. President, you have said in the past that you were prepared to make sacrifices in war. However, you said to the Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs that you were prepared to make sacrifices in order to achieve peace. Is it possible for us to be precise in this area? What do you mean by that?

President: When you have in your hand the decision for war or peace and you sit with me in order that our decision may be the path of peace, you will then become aware with all certainty what are the steps that would constitute a sacrifice on the part of Iraq for the sake of peace. However, we can affirm today that, as a people and a nation, we are prepared to make a sacrifice for peace and that we are prepared, at the same time, to make a sacrifice in circumstances of war for which others have pushed. It is natural that we should believe that peace is a great gain, because it is and because this gain would benefit the region as a whole and the world as a whole. Naturally, the parties concerned about the creation of a state of peace would make sacrifices for peace, and we consider that Iraq is among those who must make a sacrifice for peace.

We see that you are both sitting on the right. You must both be rightists.

Interpreter: It is an imposed rightism, not one of choice.

ABC News: I believe, Mr. President, that you agree with me that we have found ourselves sitting face to face and must be direct.

President: Quite correct.

ABC News: Could you give us some information or thoughts on the goal of achieving peace and how you would change or transfer to the path of peace, you and the alliance against you?

President: At the beginning of every path to peace there are requirements. Firstly, there must be an in-depth and comprehensive dialogue between the parties concerned, and each of the parties present must be prepared, psychologically and practically, to move matters in the direction of peace and be prepared, psychologically and practically, to make the appropriate sacrifice for peace. For example, imagine the following: if Syria was now asked to be flexible in its position towards Lebanon, you would find that that would be difficult for it unless it perceived a clear gain in its choice of the path of peace. The flexibility which it applied on the question of the occupation of Lebanon, for example, would have to bring it a gain. With regard to us, as Arabs, we would regard the liberation of the Palestinian territories as a gain for all, which would include Jerusalem.

ABC News: But I should like an example concerning Iraq, not Syria, if possible.

President: Permit me to cite an example. If Syria regained the liberated Golan and an Arab and Muslim country gained Jerusalem and the liberated Palestinian territories and they wanted the peace of which they have been deprived ever since

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Israel's occupation of Arab land and the land of Palestine, flexibility on the part of Syria regarding its positions in Lebanon would not be regarded as a defeat but as flexibility called for by the peace settlement. Iraq is also a Muslim and Arab country. If Lebanon became stable and Palestine and the Golan were liberated, all these would be regarded as gains, and, in addition to this gain, Iraq would enjoy peace, because of the absence of which the conspiracy against it arose and the situation led to the events of 2 August. These examples, then, will enable you to imagine how matters are.

ABC News: Mr. President, in the United States, there is a belief that we are between war and peace regarding Kuwait. Could you give us an idea of what you believe in this matter? Are we going in the direction of war or in the direction of peace?

President: What we want is to be oriented towards peace and not war. The one that is helping to push matters in the direction of war is the United States Administration. Such a decision requires careful consideration and not taking the use of force as an easy option. For example, we believe that the recent decision of the United States Administration to dispatch 100,000 marines to the region makes it easy for the United States Administration to push in the direction of war, not in the direction of peace. However, if force is used mainly for the defence of Saudi Arabia, as was the first idea behind President Bush's decision, and is not intended to resolve the so-called "Gulf crisis", this fact is closer to peace prospects than war prospects.

ABC News: I do not understand you, Mr. President.

President: I wish to state briefly that, whenever a decision-maker finds that the force he controls can injure the opposing party and enable him to dispense with the path of peace in the attainment of his goals, such circumstances are an incentive to war. Accordingly, the long-term presence of United States forces in the land of Arab and Muslim holy places and their reinforcement from time to time will constitute a burden on the United States decision-making centre, and they will then find themselves closer to war than if they had chosen the path of peace.

ABC News: You are saying then, Mr. President, that you believe that President Bush has changed the rules of the game and that he is giving his forces greater attack capability in order to engage in war, not peace?

President: President Bush has changed his objectives a number of times between 2 August and the present. In the beginning he gave preference to the concept that the basic task of his forces was to defend Saudi Arabia. Then, after a few days, he began to bring in new objectives. When he was criticized for adhering to the previous ruling family in Kuwait, he began to talk of oil. When he was criticized for the fact that oil was sold to the United States in all circumstances and asked why did he send American boys to shed their blood for the sake of oil, which was easily available to the Americans, he began to give weight to what he called "international ethics and laws". When he was confronted with other cases in which he had not acted as he was acting in the present case, the Administration resumed talk of the dangers of having Iraq in possession of a large

proportion of the world's oil reserves. Here United States officials began to increase the volume from 20 per cent at the start to 40 per cent later. I heard, before joining you, on the Voice of America, that President Bush says that he will go to Saudi Arabia and meet with United States troops in order to thank them and tell them that they are defending peace.

ABC News: There is an alliance of forces facing you in Saudi Arabia. What do you think this alliance wants of you? Does it want to eject you from Kuwait or parts of Iraq or does it want to remove you personally from power. What is your assessment of this situation, Mr. President?

President: We firmly believe that this alliance may partly have unified goals and may partly not agree from the start with those goals. The fundamental thing is to weaken Iraq and to achieve any of the goals that you have mentioned, which are intended to weaken Iraq. The United States, for example, found itself after the Soviet Union's withdrawal from the arena prompted by an erroneous factor, namely, the desire for domination over the whole world. The main parties that it wishes to dominate are Europe and Japan. We believe that this domination will not be achieved except by genuine domination of the oil region.

ABC News: Mr. President, you say that the United States wishes to dominate Europe and Japan and that in order to achieve that it wants to dominate the Gulf and the oil wells?

President: Yes, this is what we said. Israel, for its part, wants to retain the occupied Arab territories and is striving to expand. Accordingly, it does not want any Arab or any Muslim to call it an aggressor. On this point, its goals converge with those of the Administration and of Hosni, who is now carrying his purse round the Gulf States in order to collect money from them and increasing the personal ties which did not seem to be known among us and which are being utilized by a conspiracy on the instructions of the United States with a view to ensuring that Bush's wishes are fulfilled. All these factors are accumulated, in addition to other factors, in order that this alliance may be paramount.

ABC News: Mr. President, could you tell us your opinion on how the United States and the other capitalist allies and Iraq are resolving this problem? How can the problem of Kuwait be resolved?

President: When there is a firm conviction that dialogue is the path to mutual understanding; when the Gulf crisis is seen as a result and not a cause; when matters are treated with a comprehensive solution, all will be resolved.

ABC News: A dialogue between whom? Where does this dialogue begin?

President: Between those who are open to attack and those who are preparing to attack, with international and Arab participation of all parties concerned with world peace and security and the security and peace of our region. Above all, President Bush must be convinced that the path to war is of no avail and that the path to peace is of greater benefit or of the greatest benefit and the best course for the United States people and the world.

ABC News: But, Mr. President, you have raised two points. You said that Bush must be convinced of the need for dialogue and peace and that he must desist from the path of war. Does this mean, Mr. President, that Bush and President Saddam Hussein must sit down together and talk about the achievement of peace, or must Iraq and Saudi Arabia discuss this matter. Or are there intermediaries whom you trust and who can work with you and with President Bush in order to attain peace?

President: The important thing is the principle. Iraq, on the one hand, considers that dialogue is the right path to peace. It considers that peace must be comprehensive, complete and definitive. At the level of detail, if it is desired that the solution be an Arab solution, the atmosphere must be propitious. Also Iraq and Saudi Arabia are among the most important of those between whom a direct dialogue must be held.

ABC News: What did you speak about together?

President: We have not spoken together.

ABC News: Will you begin such a dialogue?

President: For our part, we are always ready for a dialogue with the parties concerned.

ABC News: Mr. President, you said that, if there was to be an Arab solution of this crisis, the two principal parties involved in bringing about such a solution would be Iraq and Saudi Arabia. But there is an international alliance in Saudi Arabia. Which other parties could be involved in discussion of an international solution?

President: On the bilateral level, we think that the principal parties to engage in an in-depth comprehensive dialogue on all issues, with a view to bringing about a comprehensive peace in the region - if the idea is that the solution should be international - must be Iraq and the United States. It would be natural if this dialogue were to lead to definitive decisions, under the auspices of the Security Council, by the five permanent members of the Council, in addition, we think, to Germany and Japan.

ABC News: Is there any dialogue at present between you and the United States?

President: At the last meeting between our Ambassador in the United States and a senior official from the American State Department, our Ambassador was told that America thought the dialogue should now be conducted through Iraq's Ambassador in the United States and the American Chargé d'affaires in Baghdad. Clearly, however, a dialogue of this sort consists of a statement of positions rather than of any give and take.

ABC News: But what sort of dialogue could there be between you and President Bush? Do you want such a dialogue and how important is it to you?

President: As we have said in the past, it is in the overall interest of mankind that dialogue between people for the purpose of solving their problems should not be interrupted. This is natural in a complicated problem of this sort. All the region's complicated problems require patience, dialogue and stamina. Whenever Mr. Bush is ready for such a dialogue, there will be no difficulty in making the arrangements.

ABC News: But President Bush has said many times that he will be ready for a dialogue when you withdraw unilaterally from Kuwait.

President: That is not a dialogue, those are conditions for surrender. In that case, what else is he going to talk to us about? Is he going to discuss whether the occupiers will remain in the tomb of the Prophet and the Kaaba or whether or not the embargo against us is going to stay in place? That is not a dialogue, those are conditions for surrender, conditions which we reject.

ABC News: How can this be resolved?

President: By dialogue. The only way of getting a balanced solution to any problem - on a basis of respect for mankind and the positions and views of the parties concerned - is by dialogue and by avoiding the use or threat of use of weapons.

ABC News: But, Mr. President, when you say, as you did just now, that you are ready for dialogue, do you really want such dialogue? Does this mean that the Kuwait issue is open to negotiation?

President: When I say something, I mean it. I mean every word I say. I said that dialogue must cover all the issues of the region, in accordance with uniform humanitarian, political and legal criteria. When people say, for example, that Iraq must implement Security Council resolutions as they are, although they were adopted without the Council entering into any dialogue with Iraq, we say that those resolutions are not the only ones to have been adopted by the Security Council on the region's issues.

ABC News: They are United Nations resolutions and they call on you to withdraw from Kuwait. Does this need any clarification, Mr. President?

President: They are America's resolutions. If they were United Nations resolutions, as you say, then the American President and the Secretary of State would not have to wave the big stick of economic threats against a number of European States and Japan to make them fulfil their obligations to the forces sent to Saudi Arabia. So these are resolutions in which America chose to depart from the international balance. In the resolutions which came before, America was part of the general balancing process: they were adopted by the Security Council and are fairer than these resolutions. You might almost, indeed, say they are fair. These resolutions are not fair. So why does it not implement those resolutions if the aim is to have a comprehensive peace in the region?

For example, does America agree to consider all the Security Council resolutions relating to issues of the region? And to impose the same sanctions which it has imposed on Iraq on other parties when they refuse to implement those resolutions? This is one of the important points which provides an answer as to whether the intention is to apply international law and international morality or simply to bring pressure to bear and then to carry out the plan of aggression.

ABC News: Could this answer be put more simply? I don't know whether I understood you, Mr. President. Do you mean that you would be prepared to negotiate on a withdrawal from Kuwait if the United States were prepared to deal decisively with Israel concerning the occupation of the occupied Arab territories?

President: Yes, we are prepared to discuss and implement in the same spirit a comprehensive peace in the region as a whole, with each issue being addressed in its own context but in accordance with uniform criteria. You may have seen the statement by Mr. Heath, the former British Prime Minister, about Kuwait. He said, for example, and he is not an Iraqi: "How can you not have a dialogue with Baghdad? Do you want Baghdad to withdraw to the boundaries which I fixed? Or do you want Baghdad to withdraw to the so-called boundaries which the Amirs of Kuwait later pushed forward to?" There are others who say that Kuwait existed inside a wall. Do you want Iraq to withdraw beyond the wall or further? Or how then? All this makes it quite clear that one cannot talk from on high. Those who want to talk must sit down humbly on chairs of the same size to talk with the others and reach a comprehensive solution of the region's affairs, so that all those entitled get their due.

ABC News: Mr. President, no one has more power than you do over the discussion of the future of Kuwait. Can you inform us of the basis on which the Kuwait issue will be discussed? What is your thinking with regard to the boundaries with Kuwait and how they can be adjusted?

President: They delimited boundaries as if Iraq had not been there. That is to say that it was the British Administration that said of something that belonged to us that these are boundaries. This has been said by the one who established them, Heath, that is to say the British Foreign Office. The former Amirs went far beyond them, while, for example, elementary history informs us that Kuwait was established within a surrounding wall called the Kuwait wall. This does not come within the framework of discussing where the boundaries are, because, if I was to speak to you of the principles that I deem appropriate with regard to Kuwait or the question of Palestine or the Lebanese issue, what would remain for us to negotiate?

I should like to address a question to the United States Administration. Why are they insisting on the restoration of the status quo prior to 2 August? Is the United States Administration planning for the Amir of Kuwait to marry 20 more wives, from America for example, in order to add them to the 70 wives that Jaber already has? Or do they wish for him to prolong his life in power once again so that he can add another $60 billion to the property that he owns, taken from the wealth of the people and of the nation? This is the exemplar that Bush is defending. Is this not a debasement of American principles?

ABC News: Mr. President, another question on your ability or inability to speak or to deal with the United States. Do you feel that there is a need for a United States envoy to speak with you on the issue?

President: If there is a desire to engage in dialogue with a view to achieving peace, then it can be supposed that the parties concerned feel a deep need to exchange views. So, if there is a desire for dialogue in order to achieve peace, we always welcome such dialogue. But you know that we are a people that has its dignity, just as the American people has its own dignity. So we will not beg for dialogue, even if the person we are speaking about is the President of the most powerful country in the world. At one time, I proposed a televised debate between the two of us so that the American people could be apprised of the facts and so that public opinion in general could be informed, but the reply to the effect that they would not conduct a dialogue or get involved in a debate was haughty, arrogant, odious and hasty.

ABC News: Mr. President, my question is not about the general discussion of this issue but as to whether you feel that your views are being clearly conveyed to President Bush, whether you feel that these views are not reaching President Bush clearly, and whether you feel that it might not be better if an envoy from President Bush came to you to speak to you on the issue.

President: We believe that President Bush has taken some hasty decisions, and one of the reasons for the haste must have been a lack of clarity on certain historical or actual issues. We are therefore fully confident that if the United States Administration opened itself up it would discover new facts. If it opened itself up to a desire for dialogue, it would not be viewed with anger or commotion.

ABC News: Mr. President, one of the things on which millions of Americans feel angry is the issue of the hostages being held in Iraq. How can you believe, Mr. President, that this can be helpful in reaching a peaceful solution to the crisis?

President: The Americans are not the only ones who are angry. I myself am angry at this situation, because it is a difficult situation for a man to be detained, in the sense of being prevented from travelling, when he himself does not want war. This is the case for a number of the Americans and a number of the Europeans. This is the only decision that we have made on account of which we feel under constraint, not out of fear of anyone but out of respect for the humanity of man. Our only excuse is that they are being prevented from travelling so that they may constitute a factor that will bring anyone who seeks to push matters in the direction of war to hesitate a little before proceeding when he recalls the human tragedy to which such an act would give rise. The situation of 18 million Iraqis under attack may be of no concern to such a person, but he will remember this small number of Americans or British, he will recall his humanitarian duty and he will therefore take the opportunity that this will provide for mature deliberation and may thereby adopt the course of peace instead of taking the road to war. In other words, reluctance to act may provide those who have made an erroneous decision with an opportunity that may lead to peace.

ABC News: Mr. President, I do not wish to speak of Americans, but it may be instructive to state that, when Americans hear you say that it is painful to you that there should be such hostages here, that is more painful to them than anything else. These hostages are being detained here in Iraq, and Americans will listen to nothing that does not indicate the possibility of the release of these hostages from Iraq. Do you not consider that releasing the hostages and allowing them to travel would be a contribution to peace?

President: Yes, at some not too distant time, God willing. If we find that war is not imminent and that there is some indication in the thinking of United States officials that they have begun to consider alternatives, then all of them will certainly be allowed to enjoy full freedom. But, with regard to this subject, we hope that those Americans who are concerned for the small number of their fellow-countrymen in Iraq will remember that the United States Administration has prevented from travelling, has imprisoned and has withheld bread and medicines from some 18 million Iraqis and not from some dozens of people, as is the case with the Americans.

ABC News: Will you speak of the economic sanctions against Iraq?

President: Yes. The economic sanctions are iniquitous, and they are unlawful. It has never happened in human history that medicines have been withheld from a people, and it is impermissible that food and medicine should be withheld even from a prisoner.

ABC News: You know, Mr. President, that the United Nations has not prevented the delivery of food and medicines under the sanctions.

President: They are, however, prohibited from the practical point of view. Here is one example: aboard one of the tankers that were forcibly inspected in the Gulf in Omani territorial waters, sailors' provisions have been seized by American and British troops and taken from them. You can confirm that by meeting with the sailors. Now, heart patients are dying when their medication is not available in the pharmacies, and we have had cases of this kind in Iraq, dozens of them. The situation is the same with respect to cancer patients who require a particular kind of medication and cannot find it in the pharmacies. Children suffering from certain illnesses for which the medication is not produced in our own plants are dying because medicines are being withheld from Iraq. These are the facts that the American people should know so that they can understand the abuse to which their principles and the principles of freedom and of humanity of which they have spoken since the American Revolution are being subjected. These are facts and not propaganda, and you can mingle with Iraqis and ask them and you can mingle with doctors and ask them too.

ABC News: Mr. President, I should like some clarification on the issue of the American and other hostages in Iraq. You said "if there is no prospect of war". Could you define that? You also said that the hostages would not remain in Iraq for long and that it would be possible to release them if it became certain that war would not break out.

President: If President Bush had any humanitarian consideration for those prevented from travelling he would say that force will not be used against Iraq. Such a public undertaking would free us to allow all foreigners to leave the country.

ABC News: A promise of non-aggression against Iraq as a country, or of non-aggression against the Iraqi forces in Kuwait?

President: It all amounts to the same thing, and the situation is one and the same. Would it not be called aggression if we were to say that we would attack the United States but not California, for example? So aggression is aggression, whether it takes place in the Sulaymaniyah Governorate or the Kuwait Governorate.

ABC News: If there was to be a war between Iraq and the forces allied against it, which of the two parties do you imagine would achieve victory?

President: To begin with, I hope there will not be a war, because war is something abominable under any circumstances, and the United States and the parties allied with it are in no way obliged to plunge into bloodshed. What would a Frenchman or an American or an Englishman lose of his dignity, sovereignty or security if there were to be no war? If there is some fancy that Iraq would be defeated in a war, that is a simplified conception of matters, because I have never read of a people that has been defeated in circumstances such as prevail in Iraq because of the mere overweening desire of others to defeat that people. Americans will fight when their sovereignty, security or dignity are threatened. Because they are not so threatened, we do not imagine that American citizens would maintain the attitude that the United States Administration wishes them to maintain with the continuation of any such war.

ABC News: Mr. President, we have spoken of the issue of hostages, which is an issue of concern to Americans. Another matter is the alleged relationship between you and Abu al-Abbas and Abu Nidal. Can you explain that relationship to us?

President: What do you mean by "relationship"?

ABC News: It is widely believed in the West that Abu al-Abbas and Abu Nidal can operate freely in Iraq.

President: From Iraq, no one can operate other than in accordance with general principles that are internationally respected or, let us say, internationally endorsed. With regard to Abu Nidal and Abu al-Abbas, they are Arab citizens concerning whom we have a view that differs from the view of the Americans. They are freedom-fighters struggling for the liberation of Palestine. Just as any man might commit a fault, they may have committed their own faults. In any event, we do not regard a fault committed by someone whose land is occupied and whose people is dispersed in the same way as we regard someone who commits the same fault when his land and people have not been humiliated. For example, you refer to these two persons as engaging in guerrilla activities.

ABC News: Terrorists.

President: Assessments differ, and we do not apply this characterization to persons but only to acts. They are freedom-fighters and not highway robbers. For example, if President Bush was to launch a war against Iraq, would he not kill children, women, old people, civilians and soldiers? From our point of view, we would consider such an act as terroristic. Indeed, any intimation of the use of force is a type of activity that can be characterized as international terrorism. But President Bush, for example, considers that the intimation of the use of force is not a terrorist act. However, in all circumstances, we advise the Palestinian freedom-fighters to avoid committing any fault that might mar their image.

ABC News: Do you believe then, Mr. President, that the hijacking of the Achille Lauro by Abu al-Abbas in the Mediterranean was a fault? And do you believe that the attack carried out by Abu Nidal at Rome Airport was also a fault?

President: I will not go into details. I have said that responsibility for wrongful acts must be borne by those who carry them out, and you know what Iraq's policy is.

ABC News: Mr. President, you spoke much today of Iraq's leadership of the Arab world. What of Iraq's moral leadership in the Arab world?

President: I did not speak of literal leadership of the Arab world but only of Iraq as part of a nation, namely, the Arab and Islamic nation.

ABC News: You also said, Mr. President, that if President Bush attacked Iraq, his doing so would be considered an act of terrorism. If there was to be a war between Iraq and the United States of America and its allies in Saudi Arabia, would you attack Israel with chemical and biological weapons even if it did not direct a strike against you? Would you use chemical and biological weapons against any of the forces ranged against you?

President: We shall strike whoever strikes us. As for the type of weapons that we would use, we hope and pray that weapons will not be used at all. But when wars break out not all desires can always be met. Because when wars break out in the manner of which you speak as a possibility it is not a rational choice but the devil's option. So we do not know how the devil might behave in the minds of decision-makers in the United States or in the minds of decision-makers in Israel, but we do know for sure that we shall bow down to none but the one God.

ABC News: Why do you feel it necessary to have chemical and biological weapons? Why do you feel it necessary to have nuclear weapons?

President: Because Israel possesses chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, Israel raises the slogan of expansion at the expense of the Arabs, and Israel is occupying Arab territory and has rejected all the resolutions adopted by the Security Council calling upon it to withdraw from the occupied Palestinian Arab territories.

Then, we are of the view that peace sometimes requires that there should be some kind of balance, although we do not possess nuclear weapons, as is widely believed. It appears that this is a new objective that we have begun to hear about in recent weeks, one that has been added by the United States Administration and by Great Britain to their changing series of objectives in order to justify their acts of aggression against Iraq.

Note the lack of balance. The American newspapers, the American information media and the American politicians in power are speaking of Iraqi chemical weapons, and they are not speaking of the chemical, biological and nuclear weapons that Israel has. Note the contempt for Arabs and Muslims on the part of certain Western politicians in regarding Arabs and Muslims as being at some debased stage while they regard others as being at a different stage. If the United States and Israel answer your question by saying that they will not use nuclear weapons, then Iraq will answer your question unequivocally.

ABC News: In the ongoing discussions and with regard to the need for the achievement of a regional peace, do you see any way in which such weapons of mass destruction can be brought under control? And is there any way that such weapons will not be used?

President: Yes. The only way is that peace should be achieved and that the peace agreement should embrace control of all these types of weapons as a part of a full and comprehensive peace process. Iraq is ready for that.

ABC News: As part of this peace process, is Iraq prepared to live in peace with Israel?

President: We spoke of a full and comprehensive peace. When we speak of a full and comprehensive peace, we except no one from that statement.

ABC News: This is not a provocative question, Mr. President, but have you thought of contacting President Bush by telephone?

President: If President Bush took the initiative of contacting me by telephone, then I would respond at the other end.

ABC News: Mr. President, I conclude this interview as we started out. I should like, at the outset, to ask for your estimations with regard to the achievement of peace. Is the region moving towards peace, or is it moving towards war? This, Mr. President, is a practical question and not simply a matter of one's desires.

President: We beseech Almighty God to bless the efforts of those who are striving for peace and to thwart those who are working for war. But we find ourselves now confronted with an "uproar" of numerous declarations, the dominant tone of which is to threaten rather than to urge dialogue. This is at the level of official politicians in the United States and Great Britain. However, we see that men of good will and politicians who are not in power, whether in the United States, Great Britain or at the world level, are continuing to rally. We also see that this worthy assemblage calling for peace and dialogue is increasing.

ABC News: Mr. President, you have given me the impression that the American people has no will or desire to enter into a long war in the Gulf. Is this what you really believe?

President: From the humanitarian point of view and from the realistic and practical point of view, I presume that it is not in the interest of the American people to enter into a war against Iraq, and consequently against the Arab nation and against all Muslims. I therefore suppose that those among the American people who now approve of war will in the course of time discover that they have been misled by the proponents of a decision to go to war, if, God forbid, there should be such a war. Their remorse, in such a case, will crush the decision-makers.

ABC News: Mr. President, the United States Secretary of State is about to begin a trip to a number of countries in order to seek their support for the adoption of a Security Council resolution allowing the use of force against Iraq if it does not leave Kuwait, which will certainly increase the pressure on Iraq to a considerable extent. Is that not so?

President: That is certain. But note who it is that exerts influence on whom. You have said that the resolutions are Security Council resolutions. And I said to you that the resolutions are American resolutions and that Thatcher is pushing in this direction. The proof of what I say is that the initiative for all of these resolutions comes from the United States or from the Thatcher Government, that is to say from the Bush Administration or from the Thatcher Administration. Whenever a resolution is to be adopted, the initiative is taken by the United States Secretary of State, and the one who contacts the parties concerned by telephone is Bush. It is not the other way round.

ABC News: But all of these resolutions were adopted by consensus. Is that not so, Mr. President?

President: That is true. They were adopted by consensus, but not by a full consensus, given that it is an unequal meeting among parties that trifles with the desires of those parties. What do the small countries do alongside the United States in the Security Council, for example? If they were threatened with a cutoff in cereal supplies, that would be enough to bring some of those unable to purchase cereals elsewhere into submission. Then, there are certain issues on which some of the great Powers agree with the United States from the legal point of view. However, if they were not subject to United States pressure, they would think of ways and means that might hold the United States back from disaster or help it not to become involved in the calamity of war. The United States Administration has, however, been precipitous in having such a number of successive resolutions adopted, and it is this haste that may propel matters to disaster.

ABC News: The question that I raised at the outset was not a simple question of the possibility of a telephone dialogue between you and President Bush. Are you serious with regard to the possibility of a dialogue with Bush by telephone? And what issues can be solved in such a dialogue?

President: Real dialogue is direct human dialogue. Correspondence or the telephone cannot perform the same function as when there is eye contact and the meeting takes place in a humane atmosphere in which there is a presupposition of a genuine desire to avoid arrogance and the use of uncouth language. This is how it should be. But if this is impossible, then correspondence is important, and telephone contact is important, and all of those things are better than breaking off contact. A breach between the parties concerned always gives rise to delusion, which does not advance the cause of peace.

ABC News: Mr. President, all of these discussions on the possibility of war and so forth ... Can I conclude that you have said that everything is negotiable in this crisis?

President: I do not exclude anything from the dialogue or from the search for solutions acceptable to the parties to the dialogue. We have said that dialogue must take place on all the issues awaiting a decision and on the implementation of decisions. We have not excluded anything.

ABC News: Thank you, Mr. President.

President: I am pleased with this far-reaching dialogue. I should like you to convey our greetings to the American people for Thanksgiving, on 22 November.

ABC News: I have to tell you that, at Thanksgiving, the American people will express their deepest desires for the return of the hostages.

President: If we could feel some assurance that children and women in Iraq will not be killed on account of the capriciousness of some of those deciding for war, then we would be as happy as the American people to see all of the Americans and the other foreigners enjoy the freedom to leave Iraq or to remain there, in keeping with their human rights. The American people must always expect humanitarian action on our part.

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LETTER DATED 20 NOVEMBER 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF KUWAIT TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Pursuant to our notes concerning the inhuman practices being perpetrated by the Iraqi occupying forces against the Kuwaiti people, we have the honour to transmit to you the text of the article by Alfred Lee published in the Sunday Express on 18 November 1990. The article contains eye-witness accounts by Iraqi soldiers attesting to the barbaric acts which the occupying Iraqi forces have committed and are continuing to commit in Kuwait.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed A. ABULHASAN
Permanent Representative

Annex

WE RAPED KUWAIT

Report and pictures by **Alfred Lee** on the Iraqi border

THESE are the men ordered into Kuwait by Saddam Hussein to loot, murder, rape and burn.

More than 200 of them — officers and soldiers — have deserted from the Iraqi Army and last week I tracked them down to their bolt-hole where they talked openly of the crimes they committed or witnessed.

Their testimony is all the more damning of Saddam's brutality for they freely confess to the horrors they perpetrated and admit they were so sickened by what they were ordered to do that they felt compelled to flee.

When their turn for leave came, they decided to flee from Iraq and seek asylum in Turkey.

They shed their army uniforms and military identification papers. Then, travelling in small units, they zig-zagged northwards towards eastern Turkey in cars, buses and even on bicycles. A few took their wives and children.

I was allowed to speak to all the Iraqis freely, without censorship. They gave first-hand accounts of the invasion and occupation of Kuwait and about life today in Iraq. Their stories make horrifying reading.

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MAJEED 24, told of his part in the execution of six Kuwaiti civilians.

He said some were suspected of helping British hostages. Others were accused of being resistance fighters.

But not one of the civilians was given a trial, or even questioned at length.

Majeed said he was an unwilling member of a six-man firing squad which executed two groups of three Kuwaitis.

He said: "We were told some of the Kuwaitis had been giving shelter and food to British and American people in hiding — and that others were resistance fighters. But we knew there could have been no positive proof, because all the Kuwaitis had been picked up just minutes earlier.

"We were ordered to line the civilians up against a wall near the Kuwait Gardens, close to the Al-Sabah roundabout. I knew if I did not go ahead with the executions, I would be shot myself.

"I loaded my rifle, took aim and before the sergeant in charge could say fire, I closed my eyes.

"When the order to shoot came, I just pulled the trigger. I can remember I was trembling. There were six of us in the squad and I tell myself that perhaps I missed. But I think the truth is that I did not miss. The three men in front of us fell down dead.

"The same thing happened again — we shot three more. I felt sick. We were marched away and I have nightmares about it all."

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MOHAMMED said Kuwaitis who showed the slightest resistance were burned alive.

He told of a man who tried to stop troops from looting his shop.

"The man was grabbed by two soldiers and his feet and hands were tied. He was carried out into the street where I was standing guard.

"One of the soldiers went back into the shop, brought out a can and poured liquid all over the man. The soldier lit a match, put it to the man — and he immediately burst into flames.

"There was nothing anybody could do. It was all so sudden. The smell of burning of flesh was terrible. When the flames died down, the man had turned into black ashes."

Mohammed, 20, said some of the other troops yelled "murderer" and tried to attack the soldier. But his friend raised his gun and threatened to shoot. "For a minute, everybody stood still. Then the soldier who lit the match and his friend backed away down the street and disappeared."

Mohammed said he and others reported the incident, but were told by their senior officer to forget it or they would be in trouble.

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MUFIT a 25-year-old Iraqi soldier, covers his head in shame as he tells how he and other soldiers caused the deaths of babies during the first days of the Kuwaiti invasion.

Senior officers ordered Mufit and other troops to go from hospital to hospital to remove medical equipment to be taken back to Iraq.

He said: "At the Sabah Maternity Hospital we were told to remove all oxygen tanks from the incubators so that they could be used for Iraqi troops injured in the fighting.

"Doctors and nurses pleaded with us not to do it, saying the babies would die.

"The officers would not listen. There were at least 20 babies in incubators. Three of the mothers were in the hospital and they rushed their babies away. Nurses took away a few of the others, I don't know where to. The other babies were left on the floor to die."

Mufit helped plunder other hospitals, loading medical equipment on to lorries for transport to Baghdad. But he said: "When I returned to Baghdad for leave, I saw much of the equipment dumped by the roadside, rusting and useless.

"People told me many lorry drivers and their assistants knew they could not personally sell medical equipment on the black market in Iraq.

"On the outskirts of Kuwait City they simply threw away the incubators, oxygen tanks and other medical equipment and went back to load up with food and clothes — things they knew they could easily sell. It meant the babies had died for nothing."

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JASSIM an Iraqi soldier, has given an answer to one of the big mysteries of the Kuwaiti invasion: *What happened to the body of the Emir's brother?*

It is known that Sheik Fahd Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah was killed on the first day of the invasion.

Jassim, 21, who was involved in the assault on the Emir's palace near the Kuwait Towers said: "Sheik Fahd died a hero, guns in his hands, leading his men from the front.

"He personally killed several soldiers around me and he inspired his men to keep up their defence. But they had no chance — we were too many. When the Sheik was shot, many of the Iraqis cheered.

"An officer ordered the Sheik's body to be put in front of a tank and run over.

"I was horrified — and so were all the soldiers who saw it. We just stayed silent. Three of the soldiers were ordered to take away the Sheik's remains."

● A spokesman for the Association for Free Kuwait in London said: "We have been trying to find out what happened to Sheik Fahd's body. One report said his remains were in a mortuary, but it was never confirmed. The soldier's story that the body was run over by a tank leaves us deeply saddened."

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HIKMAT a 21 year old Iraqi, who watched in horror as 40 of his fellow soldiers raped 20 Filipino and Kuwaiti women on the day of the invasion.

Hikmat refused to take part in the mass rape — and decided there and then to desert.

Today he is Turkey, where authorities are considering giving him refugee status.

The Filipinos, all young housemaids or cooks working for Kuwaiti families, had gathered in fear as battles raged in Kuwait City.

Hikmat said: "I was in Area Eight, the south part of the city called Jabriya, when my unit saw the columns of girls running for safety into the Filipino Embassy.

"My sergeant told us to stop them. We fired shots in the air and yelled to the girls to halt.

"There were also Kuwaiti girls running through the streets. We rounded them up and put them with the Filipinos. We lined them up against a wall. Our sergeant told us: 'Do what you want with them'.

"All the soldiers looked at each other. Then one of them, a friend I have known for two years, made the first move.

"He walked up to one of the Filipino girls and tore off her dress. I was ashamed for him. Then other soldiers moved in too.

"The girls started screaming. Some were crying. Two ran off, both Kuwaitis I think, and were shot in the back. They were left bleeding in the streets.

"I couldn't believe what was happening. I just stood there and did nothing — and so did two or three other members of my unit.

"The others yelled to us: 'Come on, join in . . . they are only Filipinos'.

"We refused, but more soldiers who were in the area saw what was happening and rushed over to join the others. There must have been 40 or more.

"The girls were all raped. Any who struggled were beaten into submission.

"Afterwards, the girls ran off. Somebody thought they were going to cross the desert to safety. If they did, I think they may have perished. Some of them had no shoes. None had water."

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Agenda item 28
THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA:
THREATS TO INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND
SECURITY AND PEACE INITIATIVES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-fifth year

Letter dated 21 November 1990 from the Permanent Representatives of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We, the Permanent Representatives of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, have the honour to transmit to you the following communication:

The Governments of Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, faced with the grave events occurring in our sister Republic of El Salvador,

1. Reassert their legitimate interest in achieving a peaceful negotiated solution to end the armed conflict in El Salvador;

2. To that effect request the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in the exercise of the duties conferred upon him by the Geneva agreement, personally to make the necessary representations to the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) in order to ensure the early cessation of the hostile acts launched yesterday;

3. Urge the international community to support this request.

We should be grateful if you would have this communication circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 28, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Cristian TATTENBACH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Costa Rica
to the United Nations

(Signed) Francisco VILLAGRAN DE LEON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Guatemala
to the United Nations

(Signed) Roberto FLORES
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Honduras
to the United Nations

(Signed) Roberto MAYORGA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Nicaragua
to the United Nations